



Federal Update for April 21 - 25, 2014



POW/MIA Recoveries

"Keeping the Promise", "Fulfill their Trust" and "No one left behind" are several of many mottos that refer to the efforts of the Department of Defense to recover those who became missing while serving our nation. The number of Americans who remain missing from conflicts in this century are: World War II (73,000+), Korean War (7,921) Cold War (126), Vietnam War (1,642), 1991 Gulf War (0), and OEF/OIF (6). Over 600 Defense Department men and women -- both military and civilian -- work in organizations around the world as part of DoD's personnel recovery and personnel accounting communities. They are all dedicated to the single mission of finding and bringing our missing personnel home. For a listing of all personnel accounted for since 2007 refer to http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/accounted_for.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169. The remains of the following MIA/POW's have been recovered, identified, and scheduled for burial since the publication of the last RAO Bulletin:

Vietnam - None

Korea - None

World War II

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced 8 APR that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, lost during World War II, have been identified and are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors. U.S. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Louis L. Longman, 26, of Clinton, Iowa, will be buried April 12, in Rock Island, Ill. On April 16, 1944, Longman was the pilot of a P-38J Lightning aircraft that departed Nadzab, New Guinea, as part of a bomber escort mission against enemy targets on the island. His aircraft never returned after the mission. The 5th Air Force lost 53 pilots and crewman that day in what became

known as "Black Sunday." Due to the nature of the war and mission, search and recovery efforts were unsuccessful. Longman was officially declared deceased on Feb. 27, 1946. A Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) team was investigating sites in the mountains of Papua New Guinea in February 2005, when two villagers turned over human remains that they claimed to have recovered from a wartime crash near their village. The team was not able to survey the site at that time. From 2007 to 2010, JPAC survey and excavation teams recovered additional remains and aircraft wreckage from the site. To identify Longman's remains, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools such as dental comparisons and mitochondrial DNA, which matched Longman's niece. [Source: http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/news/news_releases/ Apr 2014 ++]

Vet Jobs Update ► Pentagon Projects Lower Vet Unemployment

The Pentagon this year will spend nearly a \$1 billion on a program that sends unemployment checks to former troops who left the military voluntarily. Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Servicemembers, a Labor Department program, is a spinoff of the federal-state unemployment insurance program. The Labor Department says the overall program is meant to help "eligible workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own" such as during layoffs. But eligibility for the military compensation requires only that a person served in uniform and was honorably discharged. In other words, anyone who joins the military and serves for several years, then decides not to re-enlist, is potentially eligible for what could amount to more than 90 weeks of unemployment checks. The program's cost rose from \$300 million in 2003 to \$928 million last year.

If the Pentagon's latest budget projections are any indication, the issue of veterans' unemployment may be easing. Buried in fine print inside DoD's recent budget submission is a request for \$486 million to cover unemployment claims in 2015 from newly separated service members that can provide up to two years of monthly checks. That would be down from a peak of more than \$1 billion in 2011 and from \$863 million requested for the 2014 budget year. The drop comes amid a modestly improving economy and after the White House and Pentagon heaped money and attention on the problem of veterans' unemployment, which was especially acute among the youngest troops who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Unemployment among the “post-9/11” generation of veterans has fallen during the past several years. In February, it was 9.2 percent, down from a peak of more than 15 percent in 2011, according to the Labor Department.

Nevertheless, the jobless rate for those vets has remained stubbornly higher than the civilian population at large, which most recently was 6.9 percent in February. The \$486 million requested for next year is the lowest since fiscal 2008, before the most recent economic recession began and unemployment rates soared. Experts say veterans had a uniquely difficult time during the recession. That was blamed on a variety of factors, including the difficulty of translating military skills into a rapidly shifting civilian job sector, and an economy with diminished opportunities for the young men who make up most of the recent veteran population.

Since then, the Defense Department has put in place many new support services for separating service members to help them prepare for the job market, including résumé writing tips, education counseling and small-business mentorship programs. That new effort signaled a cultural shift inside the military, where for years, many senior leaders quietly feared that preparing service members to succeed in the civilian job market might hurt military retention. In addition, the White House and first lady Michelle Obama have put pressure on private-sector firms to hire more veterans through the “Joining Forces” initiative.

[Source: NavyTimes | Andrew Tilghman | 9 Apr 2014 ++]

VA Caregiver Program Update ► Hidden Heroes Act S.2243

Responding to a Rand Corp. report issued in the first week of APR on challenges facing those who care for ill or injured veterans, Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) on 10 APR introduced a bill that would increase federal support for this largely invisible group. More than 5 million Americans provide care and support for veterans, with 1 million helping ill or injured Iraq and Afghanistan war-era veterans. According to the study, many often do so at great personal sacrifice, experiencing social isolation, income loss and poor health. Roughly a third do not have health insurance, 62 percent face financial strain as a result of their circumstances, 28 percent left jobs to care for a veteran and nearly 40 percent meet the criteria for symptoms of depression — more than double that of civilian caregivers. “Our

caregivers work extremely hard without any recognition and rarely ask for anything for themselves, a lot like the service member and veterans themselves, who say they are just doing their jobs,” Murray said during a speech on the Senate floor.

The Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act (S.2243), which Murray dubbed the “Hidden Heroes Act” after the Rand report, would broaden the Veterans Affairs Department caregiver program, removing restrictions on who is considered a caregiver for benefit purposes and increasing support for those caring for people with mental health issues. It would make tax-exempt the Defense Department benefit known as Special Compensation for Assistance with Activities of Daily Living and would expand eligibility for the program by increasing support of those caring for individuals with mental health conditions and/or traumatic brain injury. It also would remove the time restrictions for veterans eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill to transfer their benefits. “Injured veterans should not be penalized because their injury occurred early in their service,” Murray said.

Murray said she found inspiration for the proposed legislation in the Rand study as well as her parents’ own story. Murray’s father, a World War II veteran, was cared for by her mother after he developed multiple sclerosis. At the same time, mother Beverly Johns raised seven children and supported the family. According to the study, post-9/11 military and veterans caregivers save taxpayers more than \$3 billion a year by offsetting the cost of home health care and medical aides. The Rand study, written by researchers Rajeev Ramchand, Terri Tanielian and David Adamson, was commissioned by the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, after its founder, former Transportation Secretary and Sen. Elizabeth Dole became a caregiver herself, helping husband and World War II veteran Sen. Robert Dole during an 11-month hospitalization and subsequent care. When the Doles began hosting injured and ill troops and their caregivers for dinners in their Washington, D.C., home after Robert Dole’s hospitalization, Elizabeth Dole felt compelled to do more. “Once these families are home, the challenges increase tremendously,” Dole said last week at an event to unveil the study.

The White House on 11 APR will announce more initiatives for military and veterans caregivers under the Joining Forces program. First lady Michelle Obama and Jill Biden, along with Dole and former first lady Rosalynn Carter, founder of

the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, have invited caregivers to the East Wing for the event. [Source: MilitaryTimes | Patricia Kime | 10 Apr 2014 ++]

VA Claims Backlog Update ► VA Backlog GAO Survey Bill

A coalition of senators and congressmen is preparing for a possible larger overhaul of the Department of Veterans Affairs, saying a 44 percent cut the agency reported making to reduce the backlog of first-time and supplemental disability claims by former military members is not good enough. Sen. Pat Toomey, a Lehigh Valley Republican and the son of a Marine, told reporters on 7 APR that large-scale reforms designed to dramatically revamp the VA are ahead if it can't slash deeper into the backlog of 337,357 claims languishing at 56 regional offices nationwide. "It's not acceptable for men and women who served their country and risked their lives, often with serious deleterious effects from their service, to wait for long periods of time to have their claims decided," Toomey said.

Toomey told the Tribune-Review that he plans to join Sen. Bob Casey, D-Scranton, in co-sponsoring legislation to revamp VA's handling of benefits claims. Casey's proposed 21st Century Veterans Benefit Delivery Act calls on the Government Accountability Office, the investigative wing of Congress, to survey how VA regional offices handled the backlog before proposing uniform changes to spur more accurate and timely decisions. Casey's bill has been championed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion and several other military groups. "Veterans deserve a comprehensive and permanent solution to this problem, and my hope is that this legislation will ensure we reach that goal," Casey told the Trib. Last week, the VA announced that vets are waiting 119 days less than they did a year ago for decisions on initial disability filings. Officials have blamed the backlog that peaked last year at more than 611,000 claims on a record number of new and complex filings since 2011.

In Pittsburgh, VA statistics show three out of every five claims are backlogged. The typical veteran filing for disability benefits in Pittsburgh can expect to wait 336 days for an agency decision. A Tribune-Review investigation found the appeals process for rejected claims takes about 3½ years, and some veterans, and even their spouses, die while waiting. "We will continue to work with our partners,

stakeholders and Congress to execute our plan to end the backlog," VA spokesman Randal Noller said. Toomey said key senators, including members of the Veterans Services Committee, formed a Backlogs Working Group that meets regularly to brainstorm VA reforms. He and other senators are willing to perform a "massive overhaul" of the agency to streamline claims and appeals but first need to see "data-based conclusions" about sensible reforms, Toomey said. Darin Selnick, an independent consultant for Concerned Veterans of America and a former Air Force officer and VA executive from 2001-2009, said the VA has been caught in a bureaucratic cycle for years. "I think what you're hearing is that fed-up members of Congress and their staffers is such that you will start to see bills coalescing together into a set of legislative reforms," he said. To review a draft of the bill go to <http://www.scribd.com/doc/211914285/Tester%E2%80%99s-21st-Century-Veterans-Benefit-Delivery-Act-pdf>.

VA Management ► H.R.4031/ S.2013 Punish or Fire Officials

On 3 APR House Speaker John Boehner held a news conference with Rep. Jeff Miller (R-FL) and Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) to push for the advancement and passage of two bills to provide an easier means to punish or fire senior VA executives found to be negligent in their duties. The legislation would also make it easier to deny bonuses. H.R. 4031, introduced by Rep. Miller would provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance and S. 2013, an identical bill, introduced by Sen. Rubio which is named the Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act of 2014. Speaker Boehner stressed that he does not believe VA Secretary Shinseki should be removed or resign. "I think the secretary needs to have more authority to manage his own department. It's as simple as that," Boehner said. "That's what this bill would do." [Source: NAUS Weekly Update 4 Apr 2014 ++]

VA Audiology Care ► H.R.3508 Would Enhance Services

More veterans seek help from the Department of Veterans Affairs for hearing loss than any other disability facing them today. The demand for audiology services is growing at nearly 10 percent per year. But with limited resources, the VA is

struggling to keep up. Veterans across the country are being forced to wait weeks, even months, for an appointment. In Marshfield, Wis., Roger, a 70-year-old Vietnam War veteran, sought help from the VA for his hearing loss. He was informed he could not get an appointment for six months. Unfortunately, Roger couldn't wait that long, so he went to his local hearing aid specialist and was seen that day. Roger was willing to pay out of pocket for his hearing aids, but that is not an option for many of our veterans — nor should it have to be. Currently, the VA is only allowed to use audiologists to provide hearing services to veterans. While audiology doctors are a great resource for the VA and provide adequate service for veterans, there are not enough to keep up with the demand and needs of veterans like Roger.

H.R.3508 to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the qualifications of hearing aid specialists of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes provides another option. Hearing aid specialists go through a one to two year apprenticeship training period, complete a comprehensive written exam, and are certified by the state to fit and sell hearing aids. They are more than qualified to support the specialized services of audiology doctors by fitting, adjusting, and making minor repairs to hearing aids. This legislation would give both our veterans and audiologists much needed relief while conserving resources at the VA. If the provisions of this bill are implemented, VA audiologists can turn their attention to specialized cases and complex conditions, and people like Roger won't have to wait six months for simple appointments to get hearing aids.

A recent report from the Office of Inspector General supported these findings: Forty-two percent of veterans wait more than 30 days from the time the medical facility receives the hearing aids to the time they are mailed back to the veteran, and often the delay in repairs is blamed on staff vacancies and an increase in workload. H.R.3508 would allow the VA to fill those vacancies with specialists certified for adjusting and repairing hearing aids. It has the support of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the International Hearing Society, VetsFirst, Blinded Veterans Association, and American Veterans. As Americans, we can never repay our debt to veterans like Roger and Dilbert, but Congress can pass common-sense measures like H.R.3508 to help make their lives, and the lives of those who care for them, a little easier. [Source: The Hill | Reps. Sean Duffy (R-WI) and Tim Walz (D-MN) | 2 Apr 2014 ++]

Following is a Summary of Veteran Related Legislation Introduced in the House and Senate Since the Last Bulletin was Published:

- H.R.4356: Department of Veterans Affairs Information Security Protection Act. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the information security of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.
- H.R.4359: Honor Guardsmen and Reservists Act. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make memorial headstones and markers available for purchase on behalf of members of reserve components who performed inactive duty training or active duty for training but did not serve on active duty.
- H.R.4363: Work for Warriors Act of 2014. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to establish a direct employment pilot program for members of the National Guard and Reserve, to be known as the "Work for Warriors Program", and for other purposes.
- H.R.4370: Veterans Information Security Improvement Act. A bill to improve the information security of the Department of Veterans Affairs by directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out certain actions to improve the transparency and the governance of the information security program of the Department, and for other purposes.
- H.R.4394: Serve Our Heroes Now Act. A bill to prohibit the awarding of contracts to contractors responsible for delayed openings of Veterans Affairs facilities.
- H.R.4399: Comprehensive Department of Veterans Affairs Performance Management and Accountability Reform Act of 2014. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the performance appraisal system for senior executives of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.
- H.R.4422: Establish Veterans' Job Corps. A bill to authorize the President to establish the Veterans' Job Corps as a means of providing gainful employment to unemployed veterans and widows of veterans through the performance of useful public works, and for other purposes.

- H.R.4446: VA Study on Vet Unclaimed Remains. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study on matters relating to the claiming and interring of unclaimed remains of veterans, and for other purposes.
- S.2190: Hire More Heroes Act of 2014. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.
- S.2217: Military Mental Health Review Board Improvement Act. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance the participation of mental health professionals in boards for the correction of military records and boards for the review of the discharge or dismissal of members of the Armed Forces.
- S.2243: Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act of 2014. A bill to expand eligibility for the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to expand benefits available to participants under such program, to enhance special compensation for members of the uniformed services who require assistance in everyday life, and for other purposes.

[Source: <http://www.loc.gov> & <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills> 13 Apr 2014 ++]

Veteran Hearing/Mark-up Schedule ► As of 14 Apr 2014

Following is the current schedule of recent and future Congressional hearings and markups pertaining to the veteran community. Congressional hearings are the principal formal method by which committees collect and analyze information in the early stages of legislative policymaking. Hearings usually include oral testimony from witnesses, and questioning of the witnesses by members of Congress. When a U.S. congressional committee meets to put a legislative bill into final form it is referred to as a mark-up. Veterans are encouraged to contact members of these committees prior to the event listed and provide input on what they want their legislator to do at the event.

- April 22, 2014. HVAC O&I will hold an oversight field hearing titled, “Construction Conundrums: A Review of Continued Delays and Cost Overruns at the Replacement Aurora, Colorado VAMC.”
- April 24, 2014. HVAC, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations will conduct a field hearing entitled “Access to Mental Health Care and Traumatic Brain Injury Service: Addressing the Challenges and Barriers for Veterans.”
- Wednesday, April 30, 2014 (*tentative*). HVAC will hold a full Committee hearing to mark up pending legislation.
- Wednesday, June 11, 2014 (*tentative*). SVAC will hold a hearing to discuss pending legislation.

S. 1606 (Udall) CBOC naming

S. 1637 (Manchin) United We Stand to Hire Veterans Act

S. 1643 (Cardin) Veterans' Advisory Committee on Education

S. 1662 (McConnell) Veterans Health Care Improvement Act of 2013

S. 1682 (Casey) Veterans Education Counseling Act of 2013

S. 1684 (Toomey) Service members Transition Improvement Act of 2013

S. 1717 (Kaine) SERVE Act of 2013

S. 1736 (Durbin) Serve Act

S. 1740 (Landrieu) VA Major Medical Facility Lease Authorization of 2013

S. 1751 (Heller) Authority for contracted disabilities exams for disability

S. 1755 (Toomey) Dignified Interment of Our Veterans Act of 2013

S. 1863 (Brown) Continued Education program for Medical Professionals

S. 1892 (Collins) Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, New Brunswick Veterans registry

S. 1985 (Moran) Veterans Health Care Access Closer to Home Act 2014

S. 1987 (Feinstein) EUL at the West Los Angeles Medical Center

S. 1993 (Warren) Veterans Care Financial Protection Act of 2014

S. 1999 (Graham) SCRA Rights Protection Act of 2014

S. 2009 (Udall) Rural Veterans Improvement Act of 2014

S. 2013 (Rubio) VA Management Accountability Act of 2014

S. 2014 (Durbin) GI Education Benefit Fairness Act of 2014

S. 2091 (Heller) 21st Century Veterans Benefits Delivery Act

S. 2095 (Moran) Veterans Health Care Access Closer to Home Act 2014

S. 2128 (Cornyn) VAMC naming

S. 2145 (Feinstein) Veteran Voting Support Act

S. 2179 (Murray) Homeless Veterans Services Protection Act of 2014

S. 2182 (Walsh) Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act

S. 2184 (Wyden) CBOC naming

S. RES. 399 (Cornyn) Expressing support for the American GI Forum

[Source: Veterans Corner w/Michael Isam 14 Apr 2014 ++]

Gulf War Syndrome Update ► Study Finds Mitochondrial Impact

A minuscule study of cell function in veterans of the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War could have widespread impact on future research into Gulf War illness. Researchers at the University of California-San Diego School of Medicine found that the mitochondria — the cell's power plants, responsible for converting oxygen and glucose into chemical energy — in veterans with Gulf War illness don't function as well as mitochondria in unaffected individuals. By testing recovery time of muscles at the cellular level following exercise, the researchers found that affected Gulf War veterans "displayed significantly delayed recovery." According to the study, recovery time in normal individuals was less than 31 seconds. But all except one Gulf War illness veteran measured recovery time between 35 seconds and 70 seconds.

The study was small — just seven veterans with Gulf War illness and seven controls. But researcher Dr. Beatrice Golomb described the difference in results as "visibly striking," with "a large average difference as statistically significant." She said the mitochondrial impairment could account for many of the symptoms of Gulf War Illness.

"The classic presentation for mitochondrial illness involves multiple symptoms spanning many domains, similar to what we see in Gulf War illness. These classically include fatigue, cognitive and other brain-related challenges, muscle problems and exercise intolerance, with neurological and gastrointestinal problems also common," Golomb said. Golomb believes the evidence could explain why an antioxidant, the coenzyme Q10, helped relieve some of the symptoms of Gulf War illness, including headaches, problems focusing and fatigue, in another study she conducted.

The research needs replication and further study, possibly using different mitochondrial assessment tools for further validation, the researchers said. But as the UC-San Diego public affairs staff noted, the study does imply that "Gulf War illness is not in veterans' heads, but in their mitochondria." "Some have sought to ascribe Gulf War illness to stress, but stress has proven not to be an independent predictor of the condition," Golomb said. "On the other hand, gulf veterans are known to have been widely exposed to acetylcholinesterase inhibitors, a chemical class found in organophosphate and carbamate pesticides, nerve gas and nerve gas pre-treatment pills given to troops ... [with] known mitochondrial toxicity." The study was funded by a UC-San Diego Academic Senate Award and the Defense Department. The findings were published in the journal PLoS ONE on March 27 and can be seen online at <http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0092887>. [Source: MilitaryTimes | Patricia Kime | 8 Apr 2014 ++]

PTSD Update ► Transcendental Meditation Use Urged

Over half a million U.S. troops suffer from stress-induced problems like Post-traumatic Stress (PTS). Less than 20 percent of them receive proper care due to ineffective treatments, insufficient government resources, or fear of stigma. Half get no care at all. Left untreated, PTS cripples functioning and puts military personnel and veterans at greater risk for self-destructive and violent behavior: severe depression, alcoholism, drug abuse, anxiety, emotional numbness, unemployment, family problems and suicide. More than 6,500 Veterans commit suicide every year. The Department of Defense (DoD) has invested millions of dollars in programs to prevent stress-related psychological disorders such as PTS. However, the Institute of Medicine panel of the National Academies concluded there is little evidence that they are effective.

Their new report, "Preventing Psychological Disorders in Service Members and Their Families, an Assessment of Programs" faults these programs for not being consistently evidence-based or adequately evaluated. In fact, experts acknowledge that PTS has generally been highly resistant to the many conventional approaches traditionally used to treat psychological disturbance. There is, however, an alternative approach highly effective in treating PTS. We

suggest that more attention be given to the large body of evidence supporting this alternative approach, the Transcendental Meditation Program.

Transcendental Meditation, also known as TM, is an evidenced-based solution, with a substantial amount of published, peer-reviewed research that has accumulated since 1970. In both case studies and clinical trials, TM has vastly outperformed other modalities by dramatically reducing stress, anxiety, depression and a host of PTS symptoms.

Numerous studies show that TM uniquely calms the stress of wired-up, burnt-out, anxious, and depressed people. In particular, a 2013 meta-analysis of 10 controlled studies found that TM, significantly reduced anxiety, and the higher the anxiety level, the greater the reduction. Over 350 research studies on TM have been published in 160 peer-reviewed academic and medical journals. The peer-reviewed process ensured that this evidence-based research met the highest standards of scientific methodology. No other stress-reduction program has comparable research support. American Heart Association, in a Summary paper to physicians, recommended TM as being a safe and uniquely effective meditation program to lower high blood pressure to reverse and prevent cardiovascular diseases.

This, based on a long-term study they published showing a 48 percent reduction in strokes, heart attacks and early death. Here are some evidence-based examples relating to PTS:

- The February 2014 issue of the Journal of Traumatic Stress documents significant reductions in PTS symptoms within ten days among African war refugees from the Congo who were taught TM. In a month, eleven subjects were virtually free of symptoms.
- An April 2013 study in the same journal showed that PTS symptoms among African refugees went from “severe” to “non-symptomatic levels” after 30 days of TM and remained low at 135 days.
- In 2011, the journal Military Medicine published a study showing the effectiveness of TM in reducing PTS in veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Participants had a 50 percent reduction of symptoms after eight weeks of TM.
- And in 1985, a report in the Journal of Counseling and Development demonstrated a significant reduction of symptoms among Vietnam War

veterans practicing TM for at least three months. A control group using psychotherapy was found to have had no significant improvements.

Retired U.S. Army Reserve Colonel Brian Rees, M.D., M.P.H. primary author of the Congo studies and veteran of five tours of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq, says that Transcendental Meditation "provides the mind and body with a unique state of 'restful alertness' that reduces deeply-rooted stress and improves brain function." The military needs more of that - personnel who operate with greater efficiency and with less stress, during their service and beyond. The DoD is beginning to recognize the potential. It announced the funding of a \$2.4 million study at the San Diego Veterans Administration Medical Center study to compare the TM program to psychotherapy. This is a positive start. However, the results will not be known for about five years. In the meantime, many US military personnel and veterans desperately need help now. This is why the authors Army Lt. Gen. Clarence E. McKnight Jr. (Ret.) and David Leffler urge DoD leaders to adopt the best evidence-based solutions like TM, even if they are unfamiliar. They are both veterans practicing TM who have experienced positive changes in our lives due to this meditation. They observed positive changes in so many others, including military men and women. The TM evidence-based research tells an objective story pointing to a simple, fast, effective, and cost-effective solution. That's what we all want for our military men and women, sooner, if possible, than later.

[Source: The Hill Congress Blog | Lt. Gen. Clarence E. McKnight Jr. (Ret.) and David Leffler | 9 Apr 2014 ++]